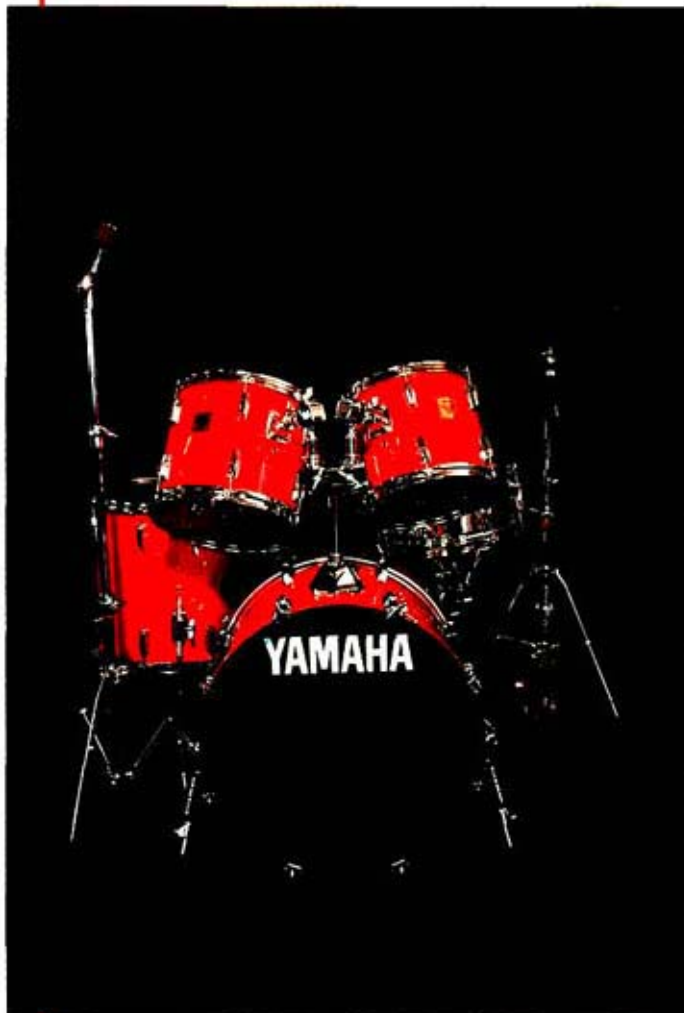


# Yamaha Po



Enter yet another series of Yamaha drums: the *Power V*. Yamaha has developed this line with the idea of combining pro quality and affordability. The *Power V* kit is manufactured in England, not Japan, and I read this as the first endeavor by Yamaha to take advantage of their acquisition of Premier.

The *Power V* shells are 9-ply Philippine mahogany, with their interiors painted black. The snare drum has a steel shell. The drums have a different lug design from the rest of the Yamaha family: They're more squared-off, and have a slight taper down. Components of the Yamaha *Power V* kit are 16 x 22 bass drum, 10 x 12 and 11 x 13 tom-toms, 16 x 16 floor tom, and 6 1/2 x 14 snare drum.

## Bass Drum

The 16 x 22 bass drum has 16 lugs with T-handle tuners. The bottom two rods on each side of the drum have square-headed screws—an increasingly popular feature nowadays. Black painted wooden hoops are fitted to the drum, and they are inlaid with plastic, matching the drum's finish. (The hoops, by the way, have squared-off edges.) Yamaha has glued a piece of ribbed rubber onto the bottom of the batter hoop for easier pedal attachment and stability

without marring the hoop's finish.

The *Power V*s spurs are externally mounted, and have a large wing bolt adjustment. They fold flush for packing, and allow a few different forward setup angles, depending upon where you place the leg in relation to its plate. Each spur tube is cut away in back, exposing an inner telescopic leg. A square-headed screw is used to release and lock the inner leg. (I'd prefer a wing screw here.) The spurs have spike tips, surrounded by rubber, and hold the bass drum in place just fine. (Yamaha has taken the opportunity to plaster its logo on the spur legs. This may be good for promotion, but is nonetheless gaudy.)

The drum came fitted with a clear Yamaha batter (made at the Premier factory?) and a black front head with a pre-cut 9 1/2" hole. Yamaha did away with the normal felt muf-

fler strip usually included with bass drums, and instead thoughtfully included a Remo *Muff I* (which I just happen to love!) The *Muff I* helps to give a solid, tight sound to the bass drum. The drum is quite punchy, especially when played with a wood beater. It has great tonal depth, and produces ample volume.

## Mounting System

A new tom-tom holder has been developed for the *Power V* kit, based on the tried-and-true Yamaha swivel-ball system. A large receiver block is mounted atop the bass drum, and accepts a single down tube. The down tube is held in the receiver by a wing screw, clamping an inner nylon piece. The tube is fitted with a memory ring, and the entry hole on the receiver is multi-slotted to make it convenient for placement of the square screw on the memory ring. On this particular holder, the down tube fit very tightly inside the receiver, requiring some additional force to insert or remove it.

Atop the tube is a large, rubber-bumpered chrome block that has two holes (also multi-slotted) to accept the individual tom arms. The arms have memory rings, and are wing-bolt clamped. Each tom arm utilizes a

swivel ball, almost totally enclosed within a chromed casing. Adjustment/locking is via a wing screw on top of the ball casing. This method is identical to other Yamaha holders, and affords a wide range of angle adjustment. Past the ball joint, the arms are hexagonal steel, to mate with the hex receivers on the tom-tom shells. The hexagonal design resists any twisting or turning of the drums. All in all, it's a relatively sturdy holder, and I was able to obtain the angles and heights I needed. I did find, though, that at acute angles the right tom could foul the arm holder block.

## Tom-Toms

The 10 x 12 and 11 x 13 toms have 12 lugs each; the 16 x 16 floor tom has 16 lugs. There are no internal mufflers, and the drums have one venthole each. (The rack toms are vented near their holder receivers.) The floor tom has three legs, knurled at their tops, that fit into wing-bolt brackets. All the toms are fitted with Yamaha's made-in-England clear heads, top and bottom.

The 12" and 13" toms required some dampening when I tested them in live playing, but the floor tom really didn't need any modification. The toms do not "boom"; instead, with just a little muffling (tape or a *Zero Ring*), they have a nice punch. All the toms possess good attack and volume at all pitches. The floor tom is amazingly deep-sounding in itself; in fact it's one of the loudest I've played. (Maybe the "V" in *Power V* stands for volume?)

## Snare Drum

A 6 1/2 x 14 steel-shell snare completes the five-piece *Power V* kit. It has eight double-ended lugs, a single venthole, and uses a simple side-throw strainer. (The throw-off side has a fine-tension adjustment knob.) The drum has 20-strand wire snares, held by black fiber strapping. There's one really great feature on this drum I like—minor, but worthy of mention: Square-headed, drumkey-operated screws are used to clamp the throw-off and butt plates where the snare connector strips pass through, instead of regular slotted screws. It's a lot easier to adjust the snares with a drumkey than with a small straight-edged screwdriver. Give the designer a raise!

Snare gates are made in the bottom hoop by cutting away the hoop entirely at those points, which allows the snares to drop fully when released. A good idea, but it could make the strapping, the bottom head, or even the hoop itself prone to possible damage by accident.

This snare has a mirror chrome finish,

# Power V Drumkit

which is a simply great plating job. (The Premier process?) The drum came fitted with a Yamaha TS white coated batter, and a transparent Yamaha snare side head. There is no internal damper, so instead, Yamaha includes a plastic ring to lay over the batter head, covering the outer 1 1/2" perimeter of the head and reducing overring. (It's a bit heavier and thicker than Noble & Cooley's *Zero Ring*.) This works so well in controlling overtones, I wonder why Yamaha doesn't include sizes for the three toms, as well.

Yamaha's coated head is not as responsive to brushwork as a Remo coated is, so the country and jazz players who use the drum may want to change the batter to a rougher textured one. I had a slight problem with constant snare rattle on this drum during soft playing; the snares were either slipping, or were bent. However, in loud playing, the rattle disappeared, and with the plastic overlay ring, the drum's sound tightened up to produce a really great snare sound. This drum is not particularly sensitive, but responds well to loud playing, without choking. Latin-type rim clicks were not as loud as on other snares I've played, and regular rimshots sounded a bit thin. The drum does possess good volume and crispness, and overall, I really did like its sound.

## Hardware

The *Power V* hardware has labels reading "Made In England," so once again there's evidence of the Premier connection. All the stands have large, grooved rubber feet (which, too, have the Yamaha logo), and all height adjustment points contain black nylon bushings for non-slip-page.

One *CS720P* cymbal stand is included with the kit. (Yamaha's ad for the kit displays two.) It has a single-braced tripod base, and two adjustable height tiers. A ratchet tilter is used for setting cymbal angle. It's just your basic, normal stand, and it's sturdy enough to hold most any cymbal. (Maybe it's so good that someone stole the second one?)

The *SS720P* snare stand also has a single-braced base, and uses a basket design to hold the snare drum. A threaded T-screw adjuster at the bottom closes the basket, and the stand tilts on a flat steel hinge.

The *HS820* hi-hat stand and *FP725* bass drum pedal both have two-piece aluminum footboards with large ribs in their upper halves for a more positive "foot grip." The hi-hat is single-braced at its base, and has two knob spurs set into its frame. It works on the direct-pull method, and uses a fat



chain linkage. A large hose clamp serves as a memory ring for the height tube. Tension adjustment of the enclosed spring is done via a large plastic wheel, set horizontally into the spring housing. The actual degree of adjustment is visible through a slot in the housing, which is gauged to show "heavy" to "light" action settings. In what was perhaps an oversight, there was no metal or fiber washer for the bottom cymbal cup—the tilter screw directly contacted the felt washer, squashing it. The stand has smooth, quiet action. It may be a bit too springy for some, but in general, it works fine, and changing spring tension is easy and convenient.

The bass drum pedal is of a simple design, using a single expansion spring stretched downward. A knurled knob at the frame's bottom right adjusts the tension of the spring holder. There are no spurs on the pedal, nor is there a toe stop. The pedal's axle is hex steel, onto which the linkage cam and beater housing are mounted (and locked with Allen screws). A flexible strap is used for the linkage, and the pedal mounts to the drum with the common plate clamp/wing screw method. A square-headed screw holds the felt beater in its housing; once again, I'd like to see a wing screw instead, just for convenience.

This pedal is lightweight, and has good action. It felt a little small under my foot, but not so that it was ever out of control. The pedal has a natural-feeling swing, and

responds well, whether playing heel-down, or toe-only.

## Cosmetics

The *Power V* kit I tested was finished in Italian Red plastic covering. (Other colors available include black, white, and chrome.) I detected a few bumps on the bass drum's covering, but overall, the finishing was okay, and all seams are hidden from the audience view. Each drum in the kit has a newly designed square gold logo badge, screened with black graphics. (There are no serial numbers imprinted.)

The kit is easy to set up and tear down, the hardware is all good (if not great) quality (especially the tom holder), and the drums have good tonal characteristics and volume. So I guess Yamaha has accomplished what they set out to do. In my opinion, the *Power V* leans more towards the *Tour Series* in quality than the cheaper *Stage Series* line, and I consider it to be worth every penny of the \$1,195 suggested retail price.



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